

Remarks by Ambassador Lee Feinstein at the Fourth of July

Reception

July 2, 2010

I am the only thing standing between you and some really good Gospel music, so I'll get started.

Elaine and I are so pleased to welcome you to our house. You have made our family feel at home in Warsaw, and we are very grateful.

To return the favor, we wanted to do something a little different this year.

So we have asked the mayors of five American cities to pay tribute to Poland. And you may have seen, as you entered, letters from Mayor Daley of Chicago, Mayor Bloomberg of New York, and the mayors of New Orleans, Seattle, and Miami.

I have to admit that the choice of some of these cities was not exactly coincidental. In addition to being the largest Polish city outside Poland, Chicago is the home of a certain President of the United States. And New York is the home of a certain Secretary of State.

This year Chicago also celebrates fifty years as Warsaw's sister city. Mayor Daley has sent us a delegation to represent his city at tonight's party, and I hope you will have a chance to meet them tonight.

New York, tonight, is represented by my favorite borough, Brooklyn. Greenpoint, Brooklyn is not just one of the coolest neighborhoods in the city, but also a historic and thriving home to thousands of Polish-Americans.

Seattle is Gdynia's sister city and, of course, home to Starbucks – and grunge.

New Orleans and Poland share a great musical tradition.

And Miami, well there is a connection to Poland, but at least as important, we chose it because of our pool.

This party is a great way to mark our first year in Poland.

It has been a rich year and, a sad one. All Americans pay tribute to the people of Poland, and to the resiliency and resolve Poland has shown to the world. With you, we mourn the loss of the President and the First Lady. And we mourn the loss of other wonderful and dedicated people we were also privileged to know -- many who were our guests at this house.

It is also fitting to be hosting this party on the eve of the Community of Democracies. And I am looking forward to being with Secretary Clinton and her delegation when she arrives in Krakow tomorrow.

Elaine and I were both here in Warsaw ten years ago for the founding of the Community of Democracies. Elaine covered the event as a foreign correspondent; and I was then an advisor to Madeleine Albright.

Now, ten years later, it's a privilege for us to be here, in this beautiful setting, with all of you, representing the United States to the people of Poland.

So. Enjoy the party. And thank you for celebrating Independence Day with us.

[Pause for translation]

Now it's time for some music. Please welcome, all the way from St. Louis, Oscar Williams Jr. and Perfected Praise!